RNA FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW Neighborhood Association

March, 1999

232 Ogden Avenue - Jersey City, N.J. 07307 - (201) 798-0493

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION OR ELECTED OFFICIAL

VOTE IN THE ANNUAL RNA ELECTIONS

It's time to elect the individuals who will hold the RNA executive positions of Chair, Vice-chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Sgt.-at-Arms for the 1999 - 2000 term. Nominations were opened during the February meeting and will remain open until the end of the March 9th meeting - at which time the voting will take place.

To be eligible to vote, you must be 18 years old, paid your annual 1999 dues and either reside or own a business or residential property within the boundaries of RNA: Ogden and Palisade Avenues from Cuneo Place to Congress Street. To hold office, an individual must reside within these same boundaries. To be nominated, the name of an eligible member is offered by either another person or themselves and then seconded by another member.

The following names have been placed in nomination for RNA executive positions:

CHAIRPERSON:	VITO BRUNETTI (incumbent) MARIA TUZZO
VICE- CHAIR:	KEVIN MAHONEY MARIA TUZZO (inc.)
SECRETARY:	BETH DERRICO MARIA TUZZO
TREASURER:	CAROL REBELOWSKI (inc.) BETH DERRICO
SGT.-AT-ARMS:	DORIS BROWN LEN DAVIS GARY KENNY (inc.) JOHN MCCARTHY

The success and longevity of RNA is based on the participation of our members, neighbors and friends. Get involved by either nominating someone or being nominated yourself! More important, please come to the meeting and vote in this election. Remember by participating in this important activity you will have a voice in the decisions being made in your community.

VOTE FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS!

ESTABLISHING RNA COMMITTEES

At the February meeting, the membership agreed to reactivate six standing committees in order to monitor important concerns in our community. Members volunteered to participate in the following committees: Planning & Development, Traffic & Transportation, Crime, Sanitation Parks and Activities. Each committee will make reports at the monthly meetings and through articles in the newsletter. On February 22nd and 24th, initial meetings were held for each committee.

Planning & Development: **Steven Carr** and **Stu Robinson** decided to get a copy of the current zoning regulations and compile a list of the key players including City officials and Board members for future reference. It was decided that the committee would oversee the Holland Street renovation and the proposed Palisade Avenue Redevelopment Plan. All residents are asked to inform RNA of any pending construction projects in their neighborhood when they receive a notice of an upcoming Zoning or Planning Board meeting. [An article about a current construction project on Ogden is included in the COMMUNITYUPDATE column.]

Traffic & Transportation: **Beth Derrico**, **Steven Carr** and **Thomas Neiman** started to compile a list of issues, including jitney buses, illegal parking on Palisade Avenue, bus courtesy, permit parking, parking meters and the proposed roadway for the Bergen Arches.

Parks: **Marshall Williams**, **Beth Derrico**, **John McCarthy** and **Allison Fontana** discussed the need for imaginative, educational and yet fun signs in Riverview-Fisk Park for the children's playground and the dog littering problem. It was also suggested that several locations be designated for the placement of free doggie bags to encourage owners to pick up after their pets. This committee will also organize activities in the Park throughout the summer months.

Activities: **Valerie Rea**, **Jack Rea** and **Maria Tuzzo** discussed the inauguration of visits - possibly the fourth Sunday of each month - to the residents of the Harbor View Health Care Facility by volunteers from the local neighborhood. The visits would include reading, talking and spending time with the residents as well as organized entertainment. The comittee also agreed to organize an Easter food and clothing drive. [A separate article on the upcoming flea market is on page two.]

Sanitation: **Jerry Brooks** and **Kevin Mahoney**. It was

(continued on page two)

RNA Standing Committees (continued from page one)

decided to organize the spring clean-up and dumpster weekend for either April 24th or May 1st. A final choice will be made at the March 9th meeting as well as deciding what special activity the community should participate in. In addition, specific problems such as dog littering and problem buildings were discussed, as well as methods of educating the residents, such as a flyer or poster campaign.

Crime Committee: **Len Davis** and **Jerry Brooks** decided to start going to the monthly Community Relations meetings held at the North Precinct. It was also decided to start working now with the police on specific problems that reoccur every summer, such as the annual July 4th celebration in the Park and the misuse of water hydrants in the streets. The committee agreed to bring the issue of whether the basketball courts in the Park should be closed after ten at night to the general membership for discussion.

In addition, it was decided to gather statistics about what the local residents consider the most pressing problems in the neighborhood. To that end the following list of problems and illegal activities was created for each resident to fill out. Once completed, the list should be either mailed to 232 Ogden Avenue or brought to the next meeting. The results will then be compiled and submitted to the police and the City for evaluation.

SURVEY OF CHRONIC PROBLEMS AND ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

LOCATION/TIME

___ Abandoned Housing: _____

___ Animal Littering: _____

___ Auto Thefts: _____

___ Burglaries: _____

___ Dangerous animal: _____

___ Disorderly Groups: _____

___ Gambling: _____

___ Narcotics Activity: _____

___ Noise: _____

___ Parking: _____

___ Prostitution: _____

___ Sanitation/Garbage Disposal: _____

___ Suspicious Activity: _____

___ Traffic: _____

___ Unsafe/Unhealthy Sites: _____

___ Other: _____

ANNUAL SPRING FLEA MARKET

Planning has commenced for RNA's Fifteenth Annual Spring Flea Market. The tentative date for this year's event will be Saturday, June 5 with a raindate of June 12th. These dates will be approved at the March 9th meeting. In addition to our regular activities of vendors, food, entertainment and raffles, RNA will invite arts and craft vendors to increase participation and attendance. RNA will also invite the Palisade Avenue Merchant's Ass'n to co-sponsor the event.

Community and municipal agencies such as the Hudson County Animal League, the Police Department and the Incinerator Authority will also be asked to participate.

The flea market serves as a fundraiser for RNA's many activities, including the publication of this newsletter. This all-day activity held outdoors in Riverview-Fisk Park is a great way to meet your neighbors and make new friends. As usual, we need many volunteers to make this year's event a great success.

ATTENTION ALL LOCAL GARDENERS:

All people interested in reserving a plot in the community garden or volunteering to cultivate flowers in the three flower gardens in Riverview-Fisk Park, should come to the **March 9**th meeting and sign up now.

At this same meeting, RNA will discuss organizing a new community garden in Janet Moore Park this spring located at the corner of Ogden and Cuneo. Anyone interested in helping initiate this project, should come to this meeting to discuss it.

MEETING MINUTES: FEBRUARY 9, 1999

COMMUNITY POLICING:

NTF Officers Paul Weidmueller and **Barbara Peretti** discussed the following concerns:

a) In January, the police confiscated five unregistered vehicles with fictitious license plates parked outside the **Griffith Street Body shop**. The police will monitor this facility to ensure its compliance with state and municipal regulations, including street parking, and blocking pedestrian and vehicular access. Tony Scarpa of the newly formed Palisade Avenue Merchant's Ass'n offered to invite the garage managers to its next meeting to discuss these problems with the neighbors.

b) The police have not responded to late night complaints concerning loitering and noise on Palisade Avenue. The problem was reported to the North Pct. desk but it appears that nothing was done to address them. It was recommended that Captain Wolleon be notified for follow-up.

c) An Ogden Avenue resident complained about an auto alarm that sounded for over two hours. It

was recommended that the police be contacted because they will disconnect a faulty alarm after one half hour.

FLEA MARKET:

There was a brief discussion about the upcoming RNA annual outdoor flea market in Riverview-Fisk Park. Dates will be announced next month. [See the article on the flea market at the top of this page.]

COMMITTEES:

There was a discussion about the establishing of the following committees: Planning & Development, Transportation, Crime, Sanitation, Parks, Activities. [See the article about this project and the initial organizational meetings on page one.]

COUNCILMAN BETTINGER:

Ward C representative Arnold Bettinger, was an unexpected but welcome guest speaker. He mentioned that he had organized a sting operation against illegal jitney buses in Journal Square about a year ago. He believes that there must be better regulation on the municipal, state and federal levels to bring much needed relief to the City.

He announced that the federal Bureau of the Census is looking for full and part time workers for the upcoming U. S. Census in the year 2000. The telephone number for more information is **1-888-325-7733.**

He stated that on January 23rd, he and several other officials accompanied Maria Tuzzo on a Saturday morning inspection of certain local streets (Ferry Street and Woods Place) that are in need of weekly street cleaning. The tour also included New York Avenue which is in need of a large scale cleaning of all the debris dumped on both sides of the road from the local properties above. [See Community Update for JCIA clean-up.]

Mr. Bettinger read the December, 1998 crime statistics in our community: 107 arrests, 1136 summons issued and 57 ordinance violations issued.] He estimated that there will be a $1-3 per thousand tax increase when the City budget is finally approved.

He described his lobbying effort to have the City purchase the former State Theatre land in Journal Square for additional parking and retail space. In addition, he discussed the proposal of a SID (Special Improvement District) or a UEZ (Urban Enterprise Zone) in the Journal Square area. He also favors putting a community center in Journal Square and solicited suggestions for how the facility could be utilized by the community.

Palisade Avenue Merchants Association:

Tony Scarpa invited local residents to the Ass'n meetings which take place on the second Monday of each month at The Family Fun Center, located at 401 Palisade Avenue and the corner of Hutton Street.

The goal of this new group of business people is to improve Palisade Avenue and to stimulate business. It was recommended that RNA send a liaison to the meetings, coordinate activities between the two groups and invite them to write a column for the newsletter.

Allison Ferrari Fontana, Secretary

COMMUNITYUPDATE:

Bergen Arches: On February 5th, RNA attended a meeting held by the **Hudson Alliance for Rational Transportation** (HALT) to solicit support for its proposal to reinstitute a railway freight line in this roadway with a light rail spur instead of the current plans to turn it into a four lane highway. A member of Halt will be invited as a quest speaker in the near future to discuss this important transportation issue for our community.

346-352 Ogden Avenue Development: On February 9th, adjacent residents and RNA members attended a Planning Board meeting to voice their concerns regarding the development of 346-352 Ogden Avenue (the vacant lots on Ogden Avenue's east side between South and Bower Streets). **Fernando Francisco** of Cedar Grove, the owner of these lots, has proposed the construction of three two-family houses on the site. To do this he applied for a re-subdivision of the four existing lots into three in order to ". . . meet area and frontage requirements for the purpose of creating more nearly conforming individual building lots. . ." He also applied for a hardship variance because of the undersize of the newly created lots due to the cliff slope.

The preliminary blue prints submitted to the Planning Office raised numerous concerns of the neighborhood. First and foremost was that the houses conform to the R-2 (two family residential) zoning of the area. The plans called for a full bathroom and third separate heating/hot water supply attached to a large family room on the ground floor of each building. With such accommodations installed at the time of construction, eventual conversion of this floor into a separate illegal apartment, thus making them three-family houses, could be easily undertaken after the Certificate of Occupancy was granted by the City. The elimination of available street parking, as well as the aesthetics of the building design were among other concerns raised by the neighbors.

Prior to the commencement of the Board's meeting, the neighbors met with the developer's attorney **Jon Campbell** and the architect **Allen Feld** to discuss these concerns. Mr. Campbell agreed to the elimination of the extra bathroom and heat and hot water supply on the ground floor. Mr. Feld presented us preliminary facade drawings that were quite in keeping with the context of the neighborhood's historic and architectural flavor. The developer agreed to flip, from left to right, the floor plan of the southern most building in order to create an additional on-street parking space. The development of a landscaping plan, however limited that may be, was also agreed to.

Mr. Campbell agreed to stipulate to these changes and submitted them to the Board as conditions that would be met in order to obtain the Board's approval. Vito Brunetti of RNA addressed the Board in order to reiterate the neighborhood position and submit into the public record those points which the developer's representatives agreed to.

However, the Board Chair Sheehan bluntly pointed out that the Board's approval would not be conditioned by the agreed upon stipulations and that

enforcement of these are not within the Board's jurisdiction. But the fact remains that the submission by the developer's attorney and RNA of these stipulated conditions into the public record will greatly aid the neighbors if necessary to hold Mr. Francisco to this agreement.

Stephen Carr
Planning & Development

Palisade Avenue Redevelopment Proposal: On February 18th, representatives of Palisade avenue Merchant's Ass'n and RNA met with Councilpeople **Tom DeGise, Bill Gaughan** and **Arnold Bettinger** and Planning Director **Bob Cotter** to discuss the specific boundaries for the proposed redevelopment plan for Palisade Avenue. Suggestions were made to extend the area from Congress Street in the north to Prospect Street in the south. The Planning Department will now submit a resolution authorizing a study by outside consultants for this proposal to the City Council.

Jersey City Master Plan Revision: On February 23rd, representatives of Sgt. Anthony Park Association, Palisade Avenue Merchant's Ass'n and RNA met with Planning Director **Jerry Killeen** and outside consultants **Anish Kumar** and **Richard Bartholomew** of Wallace Roberts & Todd, to discuss the concerns of residents and businesses within the eastern slope of the Heights regarding development, housing, commerce, education, transportation, recreation, environment and historic preservation. This collection of data and research is the first step in the City's proposed revision of it's Zoning Master Plan. This plan will project the future development and also the maintenance and stabilization of the City's many districts, neighborhoods and communities. The Plan will be used as a blueprint to update the zoning ordinance in order to reflect the actual uses of each section of the City. There will be future ward meetings scheduled for local input.

New York Avenue: The **Jersey City Incinerator Authority** started the long overdue clean-up of the cliff slopes along the New York Avenue extension during the week of February 22nd. The two-way road is being temporarily closed each day between 9 AM and 3 PM. This area is littered with thrown out residential garbage and dumped debris. Once cleaned, Public Works will reinstall fencing and highway barriers to prevent illegal dumping. RNA suggested the use of bituminous treated stone slope protection along the road edge to prevent vegetation growth.

Department of Public Works: On Monday February 22nd, RNA met with Director **Kevin Sluka** and his Division chiefs, **Rodney Hadley** of Parks and **Joe DeSouza** of Traffic Engineering, to discuss several springtime projects for Riverview-Fisk Park including:

a) confirmation that the installation of new wrought iron fence on the retaining wall will include filling in the holes along the wall extending to Bower Street;

b) the repair of the benches on the eastern slope of the Park;

c) a request to install overhead lighting in the pavilion;

d) the installation of a new fence around the community garden with money from the Palisade Treescape Program;

e) the purchase of bulletin boards for both Riverview-Fisk and Janet Moore Park; and

f) the possible installation of a bus stop shelter at Palisade and Bower.

Several projects were also discussed for Moore Park including reseeding the grass, planting of boxwood or similar plants along the outside perimeter, new ground cover and fencing to protect the rose bushes.

Traffic Engineering confirmed that the ordinance to change the direction for Ogden between South and Bower was going to be introduced for its first reading on February 24th. The ordinance for Bower Street would soon follow. The installation of a bus stop on the west side of the intersection of Palisade and Griffith Street was okayed by the State.

DO WE NEED PERMIT PARKING?

This is the second month that RNA is soliciting comments and opinions about the establishment of permit parking in our community. There have been numerous complaints about out-of-town commuters who park on our streets in order to avoid parking lot or garage fees. These out-of-towners then use public transportation to get to their jobs in New York City.

Permit parking would limit the use of our street parking because non-residents could only park in the area for two hours. After that, they would be subject to a parking summons issued by the City. A resident would be eligible for a parking permit costing $5 dollars a year. Kindly address your comments to RNA. All information received will be organized and forwarded to the local Councilman for review.

FAMILY OUTING

One Memorial Day, my family and I were all sitting around having coffee. I spoke up and asked if anyone wanted to go to the cemetery to visit Mom and Pop's grave. About ten of them wanted to go, so we went in two cars. After visiting Mom and Pop we started the rounds, first Mr. and Mrs. Agliano, funny colored stone. Lee's friend's sister's mother. Wow, she had an awful headstone. Then we went to my nephew's mother-in-law and father-in-law. They had a big stone - I think they had big bucks.

We then we went to see Zia Theresa's plot. I stated that she looked awful laid out, it looked like she was sitting up. Next we went to see Compare Franco's plot. They certainly had him dressed awful. I think those were clothes all he ever wore and plus, he had a silly grin on his face. Please don't have me done up where he was.

All in all we stayed at least four hours. My one sister said we should have brought chairs and sandwiches. We laughed all the way home for more coffee and cake.

Jack Rea

Bulletin board

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

1) NID: **547-4974** (leave a message on voice mail):
a) **North-6 Mgr. Ron Clemente: Ext. 8015.** (Ogden and Palisade Avenues from Cuneo Place to Griffith St.)
b) **North-7 Mgr. Laura Petersen: Ext. 8021.** (Ogden and Palisade Avenues from Griffith to Congress Streets.)
c) **Heights Mgr. John Mateo: Ext. 8052.**

2) PSEG LIGHTING: To report a non-functioning light in the Park or on any of our streets, call **Pete Magin, PSEG street light manager at 330-6572** and leave a message with exact location of problem.

March

Can Spring be far behind?
Won't be long now -
This is the in-between month.
A lot to look forward to -
Be patient, all will be blooming soon.
Happy Thoughts, Be Happy!
Spring is coming.

Madeline Rea

From Valerie's Kitchen:

Homemade Cream Puffs

(a Gert Bogden recipe)

INGREDIENTS:
1 cup water
1 stick margarine or butter
1 cup flour
4 eggs

1) In a 3 or 4 Quart saucepan, melt margarine in 1 cup of water. Then stir in 1 cup of flour until it makes a ball. Remove from stove and cool.
2) Add eggs, stirring one at a time.
3) Place tablespoon-size portions of dough on a greased cookie sheet.
4) Bake at 425 degrees for 20 minutes. Then turn down to 325 and bake for another 25 minutes. Cool.

FILLING:
1 box instant vanilla pudding
1/2 pint heavy cream
3/4 to 1 cup milk

1) Combine ingredients and beat until smooth. Then refrigerate.
2) Cut tops off of puff pastry and fill with cream. Replace top of pastry.
3) Refrigerate. Add powdered sugar before serving.

POLICEBEAT

Residents should contact their **Neighborhood Task Force Police Officers** if they have a problem, a safety concern or knowledge of criminal activity at **547-5714** (the North District Captain's voice mail), **547-5350** (the N. D. station's frontdesk) or **547-5719** (community service number). When leaving a message, include your name, telephone number, street address, the nature of the problem and the date and time of the message. For emergencies, call **547-5477** or **911**.

In addition, anyone with information about illegal drug use and/or drug dealing, should contact the JCPD **Narcotics Unit** at **547-5391**. All calls will be strictly confidential.

RECYCLE YOUR GARBAGE AND DISPOSABLES - IT'S THE LAW!

Here is the official list of recyclable materials that are collected in Jersey City:

PAPER: NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, JUNK MAIL, SCHOOL PAPER, OFFICE PAPER, COMPUTER PAPER, TELEPHONE BOOKS, ALL CARDBOARD BOXES & CORRUGATED BOXES, CEREAL BOXES, PASTA BOXES, LAUNDRY DETERGENT BOXES
PLASTICS: MILK CARTONS, DRINK BOXES, PLASTIC MILK CONTAINERS, FOOD CONTAINERS, HOUSEHOLD CLEANER CONTAINERS, LAUNDRY DETERGENT BOTTLES, SHAMPOO BOTTLES
GLASS: SODA BOTTLES, BEER BOTTLES, FOOD JARS, LIQUOR BOTTLES
CANS: ALUMINUM, TIN, STEEL (NO CHEMICAL OR PAINT CANS).

Our neighborhood pick-up day is WEDNESDAY. For more information, call 432-4645.

"TRUTH IN RENTING": To obtain a FREE copy of this guide to the rights and responsibilties of residential tenants and landlords, contact Constituent Services at 547-4900.

CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR NEWSLETTER

Tell us how you feel about what you just read in this newsletter. What about the quality of life on your block? Send all articles, comments and/or recipes to 232 Ogden Ave. The next deadline is **Friday, March 26th.**

Recycle this Newsletter - Pass it on to a friend!

NEWSLETTER STAFF

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VOTE FOR RNA OFFICERS at the next meeting on Tuesday, MARCH 9th at 7:15 PM

FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
232 OGDEN AVENUE
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RIVERVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RNA

Vito Brunetti
Chairperson

Maria Tuzzo
Vice-chairperson

Allison Ferrari-Fontana
Secretary

Carol Rebelowski
Treasurer

Gary Kenny
Sgt. at Arms

COMING EVENTS

RNA MEETING: Tuesday, March 9th at 7:15 PM
LOCATION: THE HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE CENTER

1) **ANNUAL RNA ELECTION for EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

2) **DISCUSSION OF UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:**
   * **15th Annual RNA Flea Market**
   * **Spring Clean-up and Dumpster Weekend**
   * **Committee Reports**
   * **Summer Sports Activities and Music Concerts**
   * **New Ideas and Projects for our Community**

LOCAL GARDENERS: Sign up for your plot in the Riverview-Fisk Park Community Garden. Come to the March 9th meeting to get more information.